



newsLetter

A compilation
of newsTicker articles
with Exercises

OCTOBER 2006

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2006-10-03

HEPBURN REVIVAL

Gives false image

Audrey Hepburn, the legendary actress, is back as a fashion icon. A biographer is concerned that people will get the wrong image of her, as she was never interested in fashion.



*Actress Audrey Hepburn
is featured in new
advertisements for The Gap*

Thirteen years after her death, Hepburn returns. Retailer Gap is using pictures and clips from her old movies of the thin and elegant actress, to promote their new line of clothing. In the ad campaign Hepburn is seen dancing in slimming black pants to AC/DC's "Back in Black" song.

Donald Spoto, the author of the biography, "Enchantment: The Life of Audrey Hepburn," said that Hepburn represents a timeless elegance but that she should be remembered for her acting and humanitarian work.

Exercise

Read the article and complete the activities.

1. What movies did Audrey Hepburn star in? Which movie is she most famous for?
2. Find descriptive words in the text that describe Hepburn and her look.
3. What does the biographer mean by a "false image"?

2006-10-06

CHOCOHOLICS

Find a venue and a menu

Restaurateur Max Brenner has opened a new chocolate bar off New York's Union Square, called Chocolate by the Bald Man.



Chocolate

The restaurant caters to chocoholics of all ages, serving such specialties as slices of chocolate pizza, warm double chocolate fondue and syringes that squirt liquid chocolate into your mouth.

The restaurant is similar to a European café, but uniquely decorated with tubes and pipes running across the ceiling, reminiscent of a real chocolate factory. Brenner has 19 restaurants worldwide and plans to open another in New York's East Village.

“People love chocolate. It makes them smile. I believe the happiness it causes does magic things for your health,” said Brenner.

Brenner's main courses cost about \$10, with drinks about \$4. Children's menus are also available.

Exercise

Imagine you are a chocolatier. Complete the following activities.

1. Create a name for your chocolate restaurant.
2. Create five tempting chocolate items for your menu.
3. How would you decorate your restaurant? What makes your place unique?
4. Compare restaurants with the rest of the class, who offers the best menu, decorations, etc?

2006-10-10

FUNERAL SONGS

Most requested tunes

The most requested song at funerals and memorial services is “Goodbye My Lover” by James Blunt. The second most popular request is Robbie Williams’ “Angels,” said a recent survey.



James Blunt

Research for the Bereavement

Register found that about 51 percent of people want a specific song played at their funeral.

Mark Roy, founder of the Bereavement Register, said that musical tastes are changing. Based on his survey of 5,000 people, he found that contemporary songs are more popular than traditional ones.

Many of the songs represented the different ages of the deceased. Songs like “Danny Boy” tended to be played at the funerals of the elderly, while S Club 7’s “Reach For The Stars” was more usual at children’s funerals.

Exercise

Read the article and complete the activities.

1. Have you ever thought about your funeral? How do you imagine it to be?
2. What special song would you like played at your funeral? Explain why you chose it.
3. What would you like to be remembered for? How can you leave your mark in history? Explain.

2006-10-11

SEVEN-METER FINGERNAILS

Earn spot in book of records

Lee Redmond earned the title in the Guinness World Records for the longest fingernails, which measure 24 feet 7 inches (7.51 meters).

Redmond, 65, shares the glory with other 2007 record winners with titles that include the world's stretchiest skin, narrowest waist and longest ear hair.

Redmond started growing her fingernails 27 years ago and since then has followed a strict routine to keep her nails healthy, including soaking them in olive oil. She also cleans them regularly with a toothbrush and keeps them well manicured.

Redmond announced, however, that she was going to have to cut them to a more practical length because she needs to take care of her husband, who has Alzheimer's disease.



*Redmond of U.S.
with world's longest
fingernails*

Exercise

Go to the Guinness World Records website and complete the following activities.

www.guinnessworldrecords.com

1. Check out the website. What are the record categories? Find three interesting records of your choice and share them with the class.
2. Find out who had the narrowest waist and how much it measures.
3. Who holds the record for the stretchiest skin? Describe what it looks like.

2006-10-16

ODDITIES EXPLAINED

Questions answered

Have you ever wondered why hair turns grey, or why your fingers wrinkle in water? If so, Mick O'Hare has the answers to all your questions. The popular columnist has created a book of answers to odd questions.



Penguins

O'Hare is not an expert scientist but the editor of a new book titled "Why Don't Penguins' Feet Freeze?" His book gives the answers to 115 questions, including the response to the name of the book.

The book is a compilation of questions and answers supplied by readers of the *New Scientist* magazine. The weekly publishes a column that deals with odd inquiries that come from all over the world, and O'Hare included his favorites.

The most popular topics are science, weather, odd plants and animals and bodily functions.

Exercise

Read the article and complete the activities.

1. Invent a possible answer to the question, "Why don't Penguins' feet freeze?". Compare answers with the class. What is the most original response?
2. Write three questions that you would like the answers to. Read them aloud in class. As a class, pick three questions and work on finding the answers as a group.

2006-10-17

CLASSIC GAMES

Hit the spot

Even though the hot new video games have better graphics and sound effects, the old-fashioned games are making a comeback.



Pac-man

Popular games from the 1980s like “Pac-Man” and “Space Invaders” that mom and dad used to play are making their way back. Thanks to new online services, it’s easier to download and play these old favorites.

Fans are usually older players who enjoyed playing the original arcade games during their youth or on their home Atari systems. Back then you had to pump quarters into the arcade machines or get blisters on your hands from handling the Atari joystick. But nowadays, you can comfortably play them on your home computer.

Because they are classic games, young and old enjoy them alike.

Exercise

Read the article and answer the following questions.

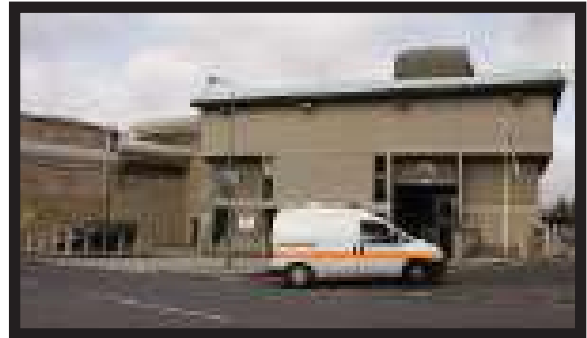
1. Define and describe the following words: quarters, Atari, blisters, joystick.
2. How is Pac-Man played? What is the object of the game?
3. What are your favorite games? Do you prefer the classic games or new ones?

2006-10-18

JAIL OVERCROWDING

Reid takes action

Home Secretary John Reid is considering what measures to take in order to solve the problem of the overcrowding crisis in prisons.



A security vehicle drives by Wakefield prison

The prison population is about to peak at its limit of 80,000 inmates. Time is running out and decisions need to be made immediately because there is only room for 100 more prisoners.

Some viable options are to house inmates in police cells, transfer foreign prisoners back to their home countries where they can complete their sentences, or put prisoners in open jails.

Lord Chief Justice Phillips said that prisons are so crowded that proper rehabilitation isn't possible. He suggests that offenders should be given community service-based punishments instead of jail time.

Exercise

Read the article and answer the following questions.

1. Why is overcrowding a problem?
2. What is community service? What kind of community service work would you suggest for the prisoners?
3. What other solutions do you have for the overcrowding crisis? Discuss as a class.

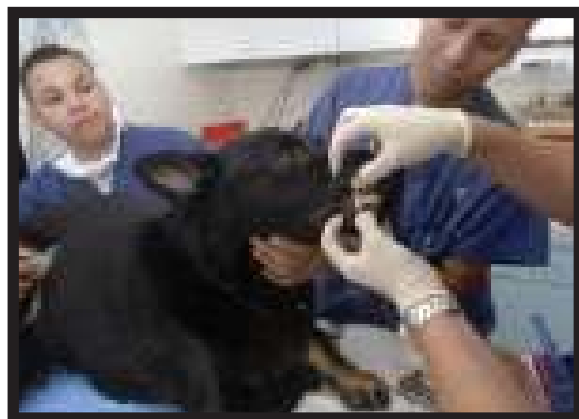
2006-10-19

PET LOVERS

Sending dogs to the dentist

The dentistry field is expanding to include veterinarians who perform various dental procedures on well-loved pets.

Anson Tsugawa is one of 100-plus certified veterinary dentists worldwide. The field is not well known but is rapidly gaining recognition. Tsugawa offers services including, fitting braces, cleaning and capping canine teeth and other more complex procedures like root canals or jaw reconstruction.



Dentistry for dogs

Tsugawa has a modern dental lab and uses dental instruments designed for humans. He even offers a variety of flavored dental paste for his furry patients.

Veterinarians stress that animals are not operated on unnecessarily and all surgeries have a medical benefit, whether removing a flap of skin in a Shar-Pei's wrinkly face to eliminate the likelihood of fungal disease or reconstructing a jaw ravaged by cancer.

Exercise

Read the article and complete the activities.

1. What do you think about pets getting dental treatment?
2. What kinds of procedures do the dentists perform? Describe them.
3. How are pets treated in your country? What is the care like for them? Do people pay for expensive treatments if their pets are ill? Explain.

2006-10-20

MUSLIM TEACHER

Claims veil was not a problem

A Muslim teaching assistant was recently suspended for wearing a veil at the Heathfield Church of England Junior School.



A Muslim woman

Aishah Azmi said the students never complained of her veil and that it had never been an issue of concern, until now.

In an interview with The BBC, Kirkless Council said it had asked Azmi to remove her veil in class. Azmi said she had no problem taking it off in front of the children, but refused to do so when male colleagues were present.

Last week, Jack Straw, leader of the house, said that when Muslim women wear full veils, it “made community relations difficult” and added that they were making a statement of “separation and difference.”

Exercise

Answer the following statements with either True or False. Correct all false statements.

1. Students were bothered by Azmi's veil.
2. Azmi refused to remove her veil while in public.
3. The teaching assistant was asked to leave the school.
4. Muslim women that wear full veils do so because they want to separate themselves from everyone else.

2006-10-23

HEALTH BENEFITS FROM FISH

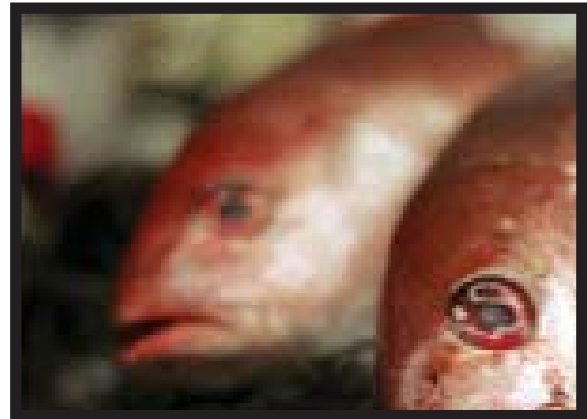
US government stresses importance

A recent study by the US government reassures Americans that eating fish is safe and healthy.

The Commerce Department reported that seafood is “rich in nutrients, low in saturated fat” and should be a key food staple in the American diet. It added that fish has an important role in reducing the risk of heart disease, which is the number one cause of death in the United States.

Researchers said the government needs to reassure the public that the benefits of eating seafood outweigh the risks of consuming fish tainted with environmental contaminants.

A study by Harvard University’s School of Public Health said that coronary death can be reduced by 36 percent with just a moderate consumption of fish.



Fresh Red Snapper lies on ice at a San Francisco store

Exercise

Read the article and answer the following questions.

1. Why are people wary of eating fish?
2. What makes fish such a healthy food?
3. How does eating fish affect your heart?

2006-10-24

NBC REMOVES FOOTAGE

Won't show Madonna crucifixion

Christian groups have been pressuring the NBC television network to take out scenes of Madonna's concert special that show her singing on a giant cross in a mock crucifixion.



Madonna performs during her "Confessions Tour"

After much deliberation, the network agreed to remove the footage of her previously recorded concert performance from its TV version.

The Roman Catholic Church and the Russian Orthodox Church protested the scenes saying they were "blasphemous and sacrilegious". The pop star however argued that the segment had no anti-Christian message but was a message for the world to unite and help one another.

Madonna said, "I believe if Jesus were alive today, he would be doing the same thing," adding that her specific intent was to bring attention to the extreme poverty in Africa.

Exercise

Read the article and answer the questions.

1. Why do religious groups have a problem with Madonna's performance?
2. Do you think the mock crucifixion should be shown on TV? Explain your answer.
3. Can you think of any other ways that Madonna could use to spread her message for world unity and aid for poverty in Africa? What other possibilities are there other than staging a mock crucifixion?

2006-10-25

AMERICAN BISON

Greens eye comeback

Ecologists hope to reintroduce the bison population and let them roam the wilderness once again in Western America.



Bison

Over 100 scientists, ranchers, policymakers and representatives from Native American groups will attend a conference in Denver, Colorado to discuss the future of the bison.

Kent Redford from the Wildlife Conservation Society said that Kansas, Iowa and Oklahoma would be prime areas that could sustain small herds of bison, as these western states are already home to various herds.

Replenishing the land with bison will not be easy. Environmental changes and a population growth are only some of the obstacles the animals will face.

Only a few bison actually roam the wild. The biggest wild herd in the lower 48 states is in the famed Yellowstone National Park and numbers about 3,900.

Exercise

Listen to the article and answer the following questions.

1. Who will attend the conference?
2. What will be discussed at the conference?
3. What problems do the animals face?
4. Which states in the west would be a good environment for the bison?

2006-10-26

VIDEO GAMES

A blessing or a curse?

London's Science Museum has a new exhibition that questions the history of video games and how they affect players.

Adults pondered the advantages and disadvantages of the gaming revolution while kids enjoyed playing the 120 games offered at the exhibit.



Pong

Arguments for each side are clearly laid out for all to consider.

One study showed that surgeons who play video games are 30 percent more accurate and faster than those who don't. Children, sick with cancer, enjoy a new game that features a heroine that searches for and destroys malignant cells.

The downside of video games is that many kids in Britain spend about two months per year in front of a screen, instead of running around getting physical activity.

Organizers allow the visitors to be the judge.

Exercise

Read the article and answer the following questions.

1. Name three positive things that video games have added to your life.
2. Now name three negative ways that video games affect your life.
3. Discuss the pro's and con's in questions 1 and 2 as a class. Do you think people are better off with or without video games?

2006-10-30

QUEEN MAINTAINS SILENCE

Portrayed as Cabbage Patch doll

A controversial portrait of the Queen is on display at the Tate Modern.

George Condo's portrait shows the Queen depicted as a toothless Cabbage Patch doll. "They do have similar characteristics," Condo told Reuters in an interview.

Condo said his portrait depicts how the Queen sees herself in a nightmare. He said he was trying to come up with something fresh and new and that he found it very difficult. Condo painted a total of nine portraits, all surreal. One showed the Queen with carrots sticking out of her ears and another featured her as a chess piece.

The Queen herself maintained her dignity, keeping her opinion silent. But an artist from the Royal Society of Portrait Painters said it was "embarrassingly bad."



Condo's "Dreams and Nightmares"

Exercise

Read the article and complete the activities.

1. Look at the picture. Describe the painting of the Queen. What is your opinion on the artist's portrayal?
2. How do you imagine paintings of royalty to be? Should they be serious, formal, etc.? Explain.
3. If an artist painted your portrait, how would you like it to be? What scenery, background or items would be included that describe your personality?

2006-10-31

COBAIN EARNS MORE THAN ELVIS

Wealthiest dead celeb

Legendary performer Elvis Presley had to bow down to Nirvana's Kurt Cobain as the top-earning dead celebrity.

According to Forbes.com's Alist, rocker Cobain earned \$50 million dollars in one year, with Presley coming in second with \$42 million. Forbes.com gets its information by calculating dollar amounts on licensing agreements that use the deceased celebrities' work.



Kurt Cobain is seen performing in Los Angeles

Courtney Love, Cobain's widow, bumped him up to the top spot on the list by selling 25 percent of Nirvana's song rights to PrimeWave publishing company.

Other famous deceased earners include, "Peanuts" cartoon strip creator Charles Schulz at \$35 million, Beatle legend John Lennon at \$24 million and physicist Albert Einstein at \$20 million. Also on the list are jazzman Ray Charles, actress Marilyn Monroe and reggae superstar Bob Marley.

Exercise

Read the article and complete the activities.

1. What made Cobain top Elvis in sales?
2. Name at least three characters from the "Peanuts" cartoon strip.
3. What were some of Albert Einstein's contributions to science?

2006-09-29

ROYAL QUIRKS

Stories unveiled

Thomas Blaikie shares some of the secret quirks in his second royal trivia book.

Blaikie searched the archives in his collection of memoirs from the royal dressmaker, portrait painter and novelist Barbara Cartland for any new juicy tidbits for his next royal work of art.



Britain's royal family

He has found a few worth sharing with the public. The Queen Mother, for instance, never had to open or close her bedroom curtains during the 20th century.

Prince Charles does not escape mockery either. Overawed on meeting Hollywood legend Lauren Bacall, he spluttered, "I so enjoyed your black-and-white films." "I'm not that old, prince," she growled back.

Tony Blair's wife is also said to have told Princess Anne: "Do call me Cherie." Her frosty reply: "I think not, actually."

Exercise

Read the article and complete the activities.

1. Work in pairs. Find out what your partner's quirks are. Do you have any in common?
2. Would you read a book about the royal family's quirks? Why or why not?
3. If you could interview any famous person about their personal habits or quirks, who would it be? Write three questions you would ask.

